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Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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humanity. In the great area, which, as it will be seen, this view affords to artistic activity, the Egyptian idea falls into comparative insignificance. The Greek is better as the sun is greater than the star, or the life of the people of more importance than that of the individual unit.

As an example of this I may take the statues, so long preserved, of Harmodius and Aristogeiton by Antenor. Though, no doubt, there was a strong personal feeling towards these two, the deliverers of their city, as it will be remembered, from the tyranny of Hippias and Hipparchus, they yet stand out and appeal to the conscience, as the type of the hero who is content to risk his own life in the sacred cause of freedom. They represent, in the form of man, the ideal of this quality, an ideal to which, under similar circumstances, their successors might also hope to attain to.

(To be continued.)

AN ALLEGORY.

BY MRS. G. H. FOX.

I SAW a little child who had for some years learnt to walk quite nicely with other children, suddenly seem as if it could not keep up with them. In my dream, the ground seemed covered with firm sand in which every little bare foot, as it ran or walked, made a mark, and one could in time tell by the foot-prints which child had made them. They were all to walk, after a time, across a long stretch of sand to some hills which surrounded the plain.

I noticed this child kept turning round after every two or three steps to try and efface her marks on the sand; she looked troubled and anxious, both because she soon got left alone, and because she could not quite get out all the marks of her feet. Tears came often,—and I could see she sometimes felt hopeless about reaching the goal, towards which other children seemed walking quite happily.

I longed to tell her not to trouble to wipe out her foot-prints, but first I asked her why she did so. "Oh, sir," she said, "we were told to walk straight to the goal for our prize; the Master said, 'Make straight paths for your feet,' and 'Walk before Me and be thou perfect.' I look back, and one foot always turns too much to the left and one too much to the right; and one makes such big dints, and one seems to scrape up the sand and to make no firm mark; and I thought, if I took pains to rub out the foot-prints to show I didn't think them perfect, he would be more pleased with me than if I didn't trouble at all about my uneven steps."

"Are you sure you understood the Master?" I said, "Doesn't He like to see the foot-prints, that He may know the history of your walk, and that you may now and then remember all the way He has led you in the sand,—that here you danced, and here you fell, and here you skipped, and here you went lame; but that in spite of all you went straight on? When He showed you first how He walked, did you not see how He began by the little child's way? Glad dancing steps, then steady walking steps, then heavily dragging steps with

pauses for prayer, even falling to the ground and rising again undiscouraged through the heavy sand; and through it all He never looked back. And people watching despised His way of walking, and said, 'If He can't walk over this sand to save Himself, it's not likely He will save others, or be an example to them.' But He has been, has He not? and you saw, did you not? He never looked behind Him at His foot-prints, but always at the joy set before Him, when He should get over the sandy desert. Have you asked Him? He is not far off," I whispered; and the little child seemed to know where He was, for she lifted her eyes wistfully to the hills which surrounded the sandy plain, and immediately the sense of a strong Presence was near her, and she said, "I can't get along, Lord, I get so confused which is my right and left foot, and I get out of time with the others, and when I stop to see if my footsteps seem going right, my path wriggles so and doesn't seem straight at all to me." "Dear child," said the Master, "you are trying to follow me, and I know every little child has uncertain steps, and that they won't be quite perfect, but I am satisfied when I see every child *wanting* to be perfect and trying again after every little fault. You have a little bit of My Father's nature in you, which makes you know your steps are not perfect, and wish to make them so; but you will please Him best if you will just forget the steps you have made, and will keep your eyes straight on the hills where He lives. A very dear friend of mine, even when he was much older than you, and had walked a long way, had a habit of doing as you do, and thought that every few steps he must wash his hands and tidy his dress and look in his pocket mirror to see if he was keeping neat; until at last one day he caught the secret which I am trying to teach you now, and he wrote it down for others who might be like him, and this was what he wrote: 'Though I have not learnt all I ought to have learnt, yet I forget the steps which are behind, which I have passed, and the blunders I have made, and I am stepping forward to the things which I see before me, pressing to the goal for the prize, the prize which is to make me like my Master. I will go steadily on in the way I have begun, and if I am wandering in any way, my Father will tell me and put me straight.' And when he had learnt the

secret of forgetting himself and his appearance, and putting himself perpetually straight by the rules of washing and ordinances which he had learnt when he was in the schools of the law all the day, and not on the sandy plain, he got on much better, and he found 'forgetting himself' meant 'trusting God.' He is able to keep you also from falling, for, as I have said, My Father has planted Himself in your heart by His love, and He will keep you up, if you believe He is with you and is in you, far more surely than if you think you can keep yourself.

"Children who fear they will fall, or who think I am watching to notice every little error or stumble, get so nervous that it brings on sometimes the mistakes they hate to make. If only they would believe I love them so that I excuse all the faults they are sorry for, as well as those they do not see, when I know they are doing their best! and that I do not want them to stop and wipe out their mistakes! All I want is that their eyes should look steadily onward and upward, and *I will wipe out the marks they leave behind*. This was what I meant when I sent you to run this race, and said, 'I will blot out your mistakes, I will not remember your falls.' This is My part, and *I will be sure to do it*; your part is the walking and running steadily on."

The child looked only partly relieved. "Mother said so," she said, "but I didn't think you said so; I thought it was only because she loved me, she didn't want me to worry; but I didn't think it was the truth. It was too nice to be true."

"Dear child," He said, "do I not love you as much as your mother? I walked all over this sandy plain once like you, to show you the way; and she is quite right, the only important thing is to go forward, not stopping to wipe out mistakes. I expect she tried both ways first, and found out the secret I am trying to teach you, for I think you have been long enough trying to improve your way of walking. Look at Me and follow Me, and improvement will come, imperceptibly to yourself, but clearly to others."

Then I saw the child's face brighten, and she said, "Indeed I will try,—but I see myself so much more clearly than I see you, and I am so busy with thinking what I will do when I'm grown up, I get into scrapes by knocking against the other

children and hurting them, and then I think I ought to make them understand I didn't mean to, and I can't explain how it all came about, and I don't feel happy unless they know I am sorry."

Then the Master gently said, "You may be sure the other children understand and know you did not intend it, for all are made very much alike in feeling; but the same dear friend of Mine who learnt of Me, found that the secret of not hurting other people as one ran about over the sand, was to think more about other children wanting plenty of room and to be more busy in helping them than trying to get on himself; he would run by their side, when he could, to help them; and if he got a knock down, or it seemed as if he were left alone and no one stood by him, he used to say, 'Nevertheless Thou my Master art continually with me, and Thou strengthenest me.' And he seemed always more pleased if another child got on better than himself, and used to praise and encourage them, and quite forgot to look for praise from them.

"It takes some time growing to love others better than ourselves," said the Master, "but steadily looking at and loving and pitying others will make us forget we have any life of our own to be anxious about."

Then the child clapped her hands for joy, and thanking the Master for teaching her the secret, stopped in the sand by a little lame boy who had not as good a pair of feet as hers, and helped him by kind words and deeds to start afresh; and when I saw her next she was well up with the others, the clouds off her brow; and a number of little children linked hand in hand with her were joyfully skipping over some rough stones in their way.

"These are the children of the Kingdom," I said, "they have learnt the way of the Lord, and are on the way of holiness, which the most ignorant will not wander from, if He leads them."

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTAGE.*

BY T. FRED GARDNER, M.D., M.R.C.P. LOND.

A VERY large subject, and one too great for me to attempt were it not for the hope that in this Bournemouth Branch of the Parents' National Educational Union, we may have some one or two more gifted, and with wider knowledge, to whom it may be given in the subsequent discussion to make this paper—which serves but to suggest one or two thoughts on this very wide subject—to make this paper a peg upon which they may hang many illuminating thoughts, and the garnered experience of more parental years than I lay claim to.

This responsibility of parentage is a many-sided subject, and the first side of it which I would bring before you is the State side. Public opinion needs to be educated; the religious side is well known and appreciated; parents understand that they are responsible for their children's up-bringing; some realise the necessity for giving their offspring a good education; some observe the need for a moral education; some for family pride, or other incentive, think it necessary to make provision for their children, even after they have left the parental roof; but there has been some laxity in the State control of parentage.

It is true, licenses to marry must be obtained; banns must be published; consent of parents must be obtained when the contracting parties are below a certain age; but all these laws avail nothing against the marriages of persons who are of age, who agree to marry, and who may be utterly unfit, mentally, physically, or morally, or all these combined, and whose responsibility in the matter never troubles them, nor, apparently, the country in which they dwell, until, when they become parents, it dawns upon them, or more often their luckless friends and relatives, that they ought never to have been married at all.

Public opinion, then, needs educating in these matters, and I trust before this paper closes I shall have made out a sufficient case in favour of State control being made more

* A paper read before the Bournemouth and Boscombe Branch, April 20th, 1904.